

REMARKS

This responds to the Office Action mailed April 21, 2004. Upon entry of this amendment, claims 5, 6, 11, 14, 17 and 18 are pending. Claims 5, 11, 17 and 18 are independent.

Allowable Subject Matter

The applicant and the undersigned thank the Examiner for indicating the presence of allowable subject matter in claims 5 - 6 and 10. Claim 5 has been placed in independent form by including subject matter from claims 1, 4 and 5 (subject matter from claim 2 has not been included in amended claim 5). It is respectfully submitted that claim 5 is now in condition for allowance, along with claim 6 that depends therefrom.

35 USC § 103

The remaining claims have been rejected based upon the combination of U.S. Patent No. 4,392,401 to Ess and U.S. Patent No. 5,571,325 to and Ueyama et al. (Ueyama).

Neither Ess nor Ueyama disclose or fairly suggest pickup elements that move relative to the movable device (carriage) in the feed direction and an opposite direction. In Ess the carriage 15 moves in a feed direction and the clamps 17 cannot move relative to the carriage in the feed direction or laterally relative to the feed direction. The Examiner relies upon Ueyama as disclosing "pickup elements" that move relative to a

“movable device.” The applicants and undersigned have carefully reviewed the Ueyama document and note that the pickup elements 150a/150b do not move relative to the carriage 115 in the feed direction and the opposite direction. With reference to FIG. 12 of Ueyama, the pickup elements 150a/150b cannot move relative to the carriage 115 in the +X and -X directions (parallel to the rail 201). Instead, to move the pickup elements 150a/150b in the +X and -X directions, the entire carriage 115 must be moved on the rail 201 in the +X and -X directions.

Claim 11 defines a panel sawing machine having first and second transverse cutting axes. A first movable device feeds panels in a first feed direction toward the first cutting axis and a second movable device feeds panels in a second feed direction toward the second cutting axis. The first movable device includes at least two pickup elements that move relative to the first movable device bi-directionally parallel to the first cutting axis and also bi-directionally parallel to the first feed direction. Similarly, the second movable device includes at least two pickup elements that move relative to the second movable device bi-directionally parallel to the second cutting axis and also bi-directionally parallel to the second feed direction.

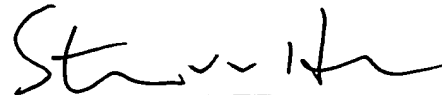
As noted above, Ess and Ueyama do not disclose pickup elements that move relative to the carriage or “movable device” in the feed direction (+X) or opposite direction (-X). Instead, the entire carriage 115 of Ueyama must be moved on the rail 201. Accordingly, claim and 11 and dependent claim 14 as amended herein are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 17 defines a panel sawing machine wherein at least one of the pickup

elements moves relative to the movable device (carriage) at right angles to the feed direction and in the feed direction and in a direction opposite to the feed direction. Neither Ess nor Ueyama disclose or suggest such a structure. In Ess the clamps 17 do not moved in the feed direction or opposite direction and do not move at right angles to the feed direction. In Ueyama, the entire carriage 115 must be moved in the feed (+X) and opposite (-X) directions in order to move the pickup elements 150a/150b in those directions, i.e., the pickup elements 150a.150b do not move relative to the carriage 115 in the +X and -X directions. Accordingly claim 17 is also submitted to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 18 defines a panel sawing machine wherein at least one of the pickup elements moves relative to the movable device in the feed direction and the opposite direction, and at least two of the pickup elements move bi-directionally perpendicular relative to the movable device. As such, the combination of Ess and Ueyama cannot disclose or suggest this claimed structure. Allowance of claim 18 is also respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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